TRACER

McHENRY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

AN ILLINOIS CORPORATION (not for profit)

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Volume II - No. 4 Quarterly Newsletter Fall, 1976

News About the Society and Its Members

Dorothy McEachren spent some time in August and September in England, seeing places of special interest this Bicentennial year. Among them, one which held a special appeal for her was the American Museum in Bath situated in Colverton Manor. An English guide, displaying early American furniture told her that Britain has nothing to duplicate this type of furnishing. She greatly enjoyed the whole trip.

More than three hundred visitors registered at the Log Cabin during the McHenry County Fair. There were of course, numerous children besides this number, who did not register. Although far the greatest number were county residents, or from nearby counties still there were a few from out of state. These came from Rhode Island, Oklahoma, New Hampshire and Pennsylvania.

Thresile Mulvenna, one of the directors of the Historical Society, and Margaret Kistler, a member of the society, recently returned from a trip to France. Mrs. Mulvenna found the Basilica of Sacre' Couer and the church at Chartres especially interesting. The cathedral at Chartres dates from the twelfth century. Its carved doors, its statues, especially St. Theodore, and its beautiful stained glass windows are each worthy of traveling half way round the world to see. The outdoor statues are, of course, somewhat weathered since they are eight hundred years old but still very life like. Mrs. Mulvenna said they also found the outdoor artists interesting.

McHenry County Historical Society president Dorothy McEachren has been twice to Harvard with Richard Crabb of the Elgin Courier News. Mr. Crabb has taken pictures of places in the southern end of the county for a McHenry County Historical Trail and is now hunting places of interest in the northern end of the county. This will include the Big Foot and Chemung areas. Pictures have already made of the Titcomb and Pountain (formerly Gardner) houses where President Ford's mother's wedding reception was held; of the old Episcopalian church in Harvard where the ceremony took place; of St. Paul's Lutheran church which was dedicated as a Congregational church in February, 1867; of the Beardsley and Ladd houses; the Legion Hall, formerly a hall and movie theater and before that a bicycle factory. Out towards Big Foot and the State Line area, pictures were taken of the Anderson House, built in 1838 and the Lacy home, built by Mrs. Lacy's great grandfather Seth Smith, in 1866. There Mr. Crabb also got a picture of the Stable built by Seth Smith's father sometime before his death in 1858. It is still in use but not as a stable. Those wooden pegs evidently held well! This building is made of oak from the farm. Much is yet to be done, further pictures from the Big Foot cemetery where one was made of the stone for five young people of one family who died within eleven months.

The Harvard Bicentennial Commission has sponsored a book committee which has been working for almost two years on a history of Harvard from the time of the Indians until the present. At present, editing is being done to keep the book within financial limits. Pre-publication orders are being taken and the book is expected off the press on November first.

Two directors were added to the board at the August meeting, Mrs. Charles E. (Ramona) Martin of Cary and Mrs. Wanda Todd of Richmond. Mrs. Martin has been a very active member for a long time. Her outstanding work is probably as chairman of the displays. She has set up and arranged much of this for the society. Mrs. Todd replaces Dick Richardson, former director from Richmond. She worked on the doll displays, which attract so much attention from the children who frequent Eckert Hall. Both ladies are expected to be very real assets to the board.

When the "watering place" -- it was too elegant to be called a horse trough -- was removed to make room for the pedestal for Harmilda at Harvard's Five Points, it was to be destroyed. But Alderman Milligan said it had done its job too long and too faithfully to be just smashed up. It looked like the base for a fountain and the alderman got city permission to take it home, perhaps with some faint idea of making it into one. What he did do was place it in front of his home, and recently it has been filled with flowering plants, a well-deserved end for an old-time utility.

Help Needed!

The historical society is asking for information as to the whereabouts of the very first telephone office in each town. Will anyone who has any such information, please send it to the museum?

PLEASE! Will those who sign up as docents for specific Wednesdays and Sundays notify Alice Clark if you must change your plans? Her telephone number is 338-1634. Do it as soon as you know you are going to be unable to fulfill your accepted time -- she may need time to fill your cancellation. There have been Wednesdays when only two guides were on hand and that is not enough. We cannot keep the museum open with so few. Also, if you would like an orientation briefing try to come in forty five minutes early and Mrs. McEachren will go over the rooms with you.

Remember, being a docent is a job not just limited to board members. Any member may contribute their time any Wednesday or Sunday afternoon from two to five. It is very interesting work since the people who come in are interested in what we have and are from many places, even as far as Hawaii. And you are badly needed.

Everyone has been twice notified that it is past "dues time" again. Those whose dues have not come in will find that this is their last issue of the Tracer. If your label has a red mark on it, this means YOU. Although the museum

is now open two afternoons a week, donations are not yet so large but that we must depend on dues and member' donations if we are to progress.

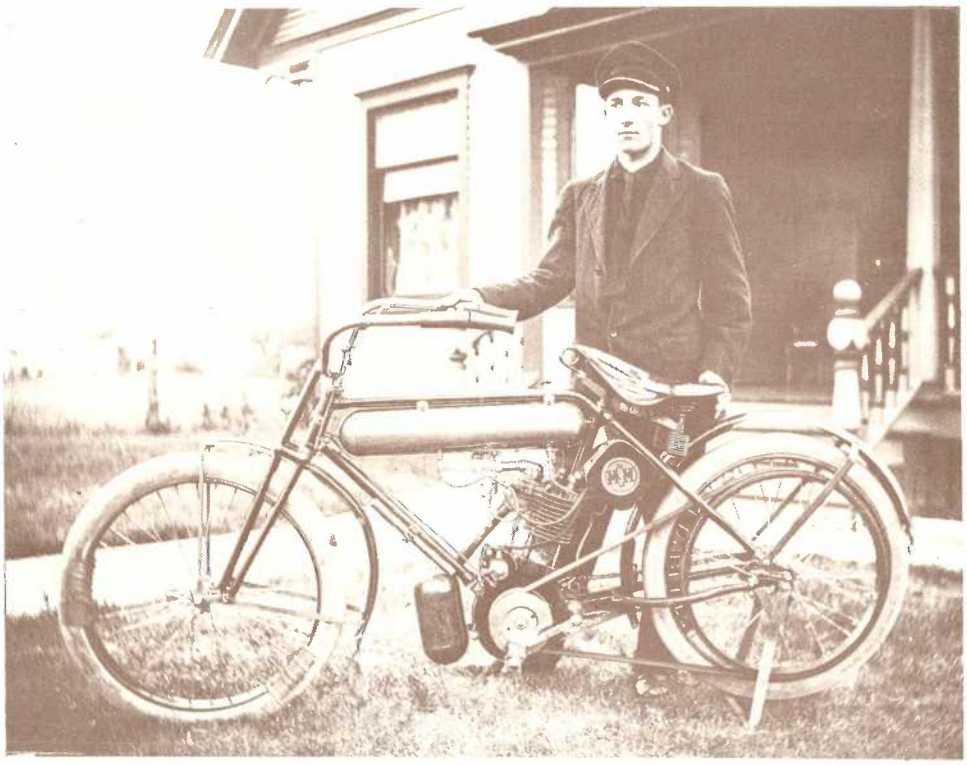
Along this same line, members should notify the museum office of any change in address as the post office no longer forwards this type of mail. Or if you know of a member who has moved, ask them if they notified the Historical Society. Even first class mail is not forwarded after a certain length of time.

Some months back the Society was asked if it needed any more show cases. At that time, we thought we had sufficient cases but since the opening of the museum to the public items have been donated in such quantity that the present cases are fast filling up and several more could be used. If anyone has such cases and wishes to donate them they would be most gratefully accepted. A seated mannikin would also be a most welcome addition.

A donation was received of a copy of a 1917 edition of the directory Breeders and Farmers of McHenry and Boone counties, published by the Prairie Farmer Publishing Company. They were published for some years into the 1920s. The one the Museum has is missing eight or ten pages. The museum would like to have a complete copy, or, indeed, a whole set.

The Historical Society has been asked if they can help with information about a company that made musical instruments and was located in the vicinity of Crystal Lake in 1910 or 1912. The building is said to be still in existence and to contain boxes and bundles of the wood used in making violins, cellos and the like. The person asking help would like to obtain some of this wood to repair and old instrument. We need to know the location and the name of the original owner or maker of the instruments.

Mrs. Frank Horn (Roberta) of 407 Dewey Street, Harvard, has copies of every Tracer save the first. This she would like to have to complete her file. If anyone has an extra she would greatly appreciate receiving it; or if you do not have all the copies, and do have that one you would sell, let her know. She is really anxious to complete here collection.



This is not a "what-is-it? but a "Who-is-it?" The picture came from the estate of Harvard people, but no one has been able to identify the young man. Can you help?

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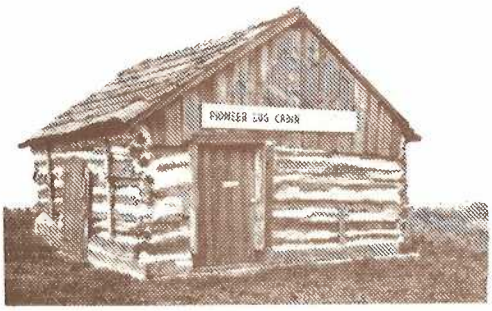
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